

## Report details state's bridge maintenance problems

### Connecticut ranks fourth nationally in spans over 50 years old; many are 'structurally deficient'



The Interstate 395 bridge over Route 85 in Waterford is the fifth-most heavily traveled "structurally deficient" span in New London County, according to new report released Thursday, Sept. 20, 2018. (Google Street View)

By [Kimberly Drelich](#) Day staff writer

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Hartford — Connecticut ranks fourth nationally in its share of bridges that are 50 years old or older, with more than half of its bridges having reached that age, according to a new report.

The [report on the condition](#) of Connecticut's bridges, released Thursday by TRIP, a nonprofit transportation organization, also finds that 308 of the state's 4,254 bridges are rated as "structurally deficient," which it defines as having "significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components." The report says 4.3 million vehicles travel on those structurally deficient bridges on a daily basis.

Rocky Moretti, TRIP's director of policy and research, said the report is not suggesting that the bridges are putting drivers at risk, as the state's engineers would have closed the structures if they thought the spans were unsafe.

But it's still a problem for Connecticut. "The state faces a significant challenge in addressing this aging system of bridges and finding the resources at both the

state and local level to not only repair and, in some cases, replace structurally deficient bridges, but also to ensure that as these bridges get older that they get the type of repairs and care that are needed to extend their service life and to help support the state's economy," he said at a news conference at the Legislative Office Building on Thursday.

Moretti was joined at the news conference by Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.; state Rep. Tony Guerrera, D-Rocky Hill, co-chair of the General Assembly's Transportation Committee; Don Shubert, president of the Connecticut Construction Industries Association; and Lyle Wray, executive director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments.

[TRIP](#), based in Washington, "is sponsored by insurance companies, equipment manufacturers, distributors and suppliers, businesses involved in highway and transit engineering and construction, labor unions, and organizations concerned with an efficient and safe surface transportation network that promotes economic development and quality of life," according to the organization's website.

#### New London County

Thirty-two of the structurally deficient bridges are in New London County, which

#### FAREWELL TO JOHN'S



Spectators watch as a crew from Ground Up Construction demolishes the former John's Mystic River Tavern on Cottrell Street in New London on Thursday. The site closed in December of last year, and in January it was announced that the adjacent structure in the main downtown building, The Whisker's Inn also recently demolished the two adjacent residential structures at 1 and 3 Halsey St. Plans have yet to be announced for the site.

#### Mold growing in dormitory at CG Academy

Air conditioning and humidity are blamed

By [MARTHA SHAMAHAN](#) The Day Staff Writer

New London — Mold is growing in several rooms in Chase Hall, the main residence hall on the Coast Guard Academy's campus, after employees first cleared it from the building in August.

In a letter to members of the academy's parents association, Coast Guard Academy officials said the mold is the result of a combination of factors, which they said was first identified in the summer of 2017. The mold was first found in the building's air conditioning units, which were replaced in 2017 and did not have air conditioning until last year.

The rooms were not designed for air conditioning, which, combined with a particularly humid summer, created an environment for mold to grow in, the letter says. In the letter, which is emailed to The Day on Thursday, the mold is described as being inside ceiling joists, he said.

The academy hired a contractor to clean the rooms in Chase Hall and in other buildings, including Veterans Hall, where some spots of mold appeared earlier this summer near air conditioning units. Employees also

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**New London County**

Thirty-two of the structurally deficient bridges are in New London County, which

has 421 bridges overall, according to the report, which uses data from the state Department of Transportation.

The state DOT inspects bridges at least every two years, DOT spokesman Kevin Nursick said in a phone interview Thursday. Bridges are rated on a 0 to 9 scale. Those that are considered "structurally deficient" have received a rating of 4 or less — based on National

#### Public gets a look at EB plan to grow

\$850 million expansion is preparation to build new ballistic-missile subs

By [JULIA BERGMAN](#) The Day Staff Writer

Electric Boat is holding a meeting to present its plans for an \$850 million project to expand and improve its submarine shipyard, including a new construction bay where a new class of ballistic missile submarines will be built.

More than 50 people traveled for the meeting at the City of Groton Municipal Center on Thursday, where they got to ask questions of representatives from EB and Electric Boat, the environmental consulting company working with the project.

"We have an opportunity to help evaluate our nation's submarine fleet at a time when our nation desperately needs that," Mayor Shea, EB's vice president of human resources, said at the start of the meeting.

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#### NFA ex-assistant coach in court on charges of sex with students

Document shows school faced him one month after first report on case

By [CLARE BESSETTE](#) The Day Staff Writer

Anthony Facchini made a brief court appearance Thursday on two charges of second-degree sexual assault allegedly involving several students with Norwich Free Academy in 2007. The statute includes penalties for a relationship between a coach and a high school

employee or coach and students who are under 18 years old. Facchini served as an assistant coach for outdoor and indoor soccer from spring of 2007 through the 2017-18 school year and was transferred to New London Superior Court Part A, where other crimes are prosecuted.

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#### Kavanaugh protesters

Protesters opposed to Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh gathered Thursday outside the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

Protesters chanted "Kavanaugh is not on the court!" and "Kavanaugh is not on the court!"

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#### Survey of 104 countries says 1.5B live in poverty

UNEP report says 1.5 billion people live in poverty

By [JULIA BERGMAN](#) The Day Staff Writer

A survey of 104 countries says 1.5 billion people live in poverty, according to a report released Thursday by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme.

The report, titled "Global Environment Outlook 5: Living in the Anthropocene," says that the number of people living in poverty has increased from 1.2 billion in 2000 to 1.5 billion in 2017. The report also says that the number of people living in extreme poverty (less than \$1.90 a day) has increased from 700 million in 2000 to 800 million in 2017.

The report also says that the number of people living in poverty is expected to increase to 2 billion by 2030, unless there is a significant increase in investment in infrastructure and social services. The report also says that the number of people living in poverty is expected to increase to 2 billion by 2030, unless there is a significant increase in investment in infrastructure and social services.

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Bridge Inspection Standards — on their deck, superstructure or substructure.

In the report, TRIP lists rankings by county of the "most heavily traveled structurally deficient bridges" and of the bridges with the "lowest individual score for either deck, substructure or superstructure." It includes both state- and municipality-maintained bridges.

In New London County, the most heavily traveled structurally deficient bridge is the one that carries [I-95 over Route 161](#) in East Lyme, which was built in 1958. DOT plans to go out to bid in 2020 for a [project to replace that span](#).

The [northbound Gold Star Memorial Bridge](#), built in 1943, is the next most heavily traveled structurally deficient bridge in New London County. A construction project for that span is scheduled to go out to bid at the end of January 2019, according to DOT.

The list in New London County further includes such structures as the I-395 bridge over Route 97 and the Shetucket River in Norwich, and the Route 1 span over the Pawcatuck River in Stonington, among others.

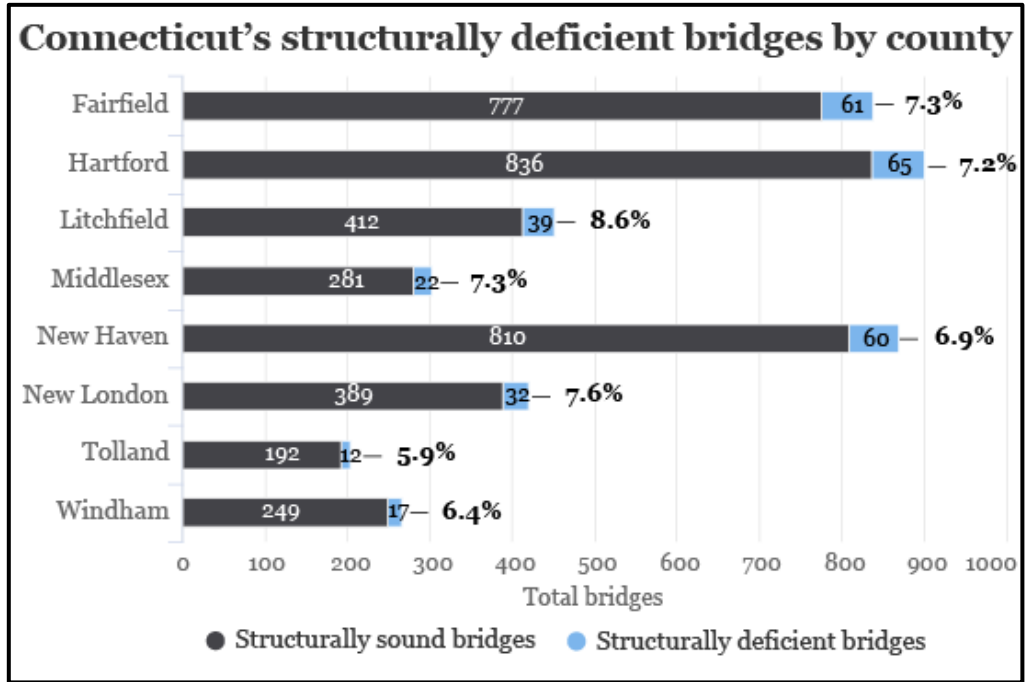
Nursick confirmed that all of the New London County "structurally deficient" bridges that are maintained by the state and listed in the report are part of DOT's program to be rehabilitated or replaced, or are already under construction. When a bridge receives a rating of 4 or less, it triggers a DOT program to rehabilitate, reconstruct or replace that structure.

He said that over the course of a bridge's lifespan, DOT conducts routine maintenance and construction programs to keep up the structure's condition. But eventually, the bridge will need a more thorough response to address the natural deterioration and aging process. That's when DOT engages the rehabilitation, reconstruction or replacement of the bridge.

He said the designation of being "structurally deficient" is a normal benchmark in a bridge's lifespan, which is monitored, and is not necessarily a safety issue.

"The issue at hand is making sure we have the funding to maintain those necessary programs to address short-term and long-

many structures in the state were built in the '50s, '60s, '70s and '80s and have a 50-year design life, Wray said.



term rehabilitation and replacement of these structures," Nursick said.

He said 8.6 percent of DOT's 4,017 bridges were considered structurally deficient in 2012, with the percentage dropping to 5.2 percent in 2017.

During the news conference, Guerrero said it is important to pass the transportation ["lockbox" amendment](#) on the ballot for the November election, while Blumenthal called for a bipartisan response on both the federal and state levels.

"The time for talk has gone," Blumenthal said. "The time for action was yesterday, and we have a responsibility to do it now."

Shubert said the more than 300 structurally deficient bridges in Connecticut are part of "a growing problem."

"It's only indicative of a small part of a growing problem with the thousands of bridges in Connecticut that are over 50 years old, that are over their design life, that are operating over capacity and are subjected to all sorts of de-icing chemicals every winter, so there's a bigger problem brewing under today's report," he said.

Connecticut's transportation network has faced an under-investment in infrastructure over the past 50 years, and

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### Top 10 most heavily traveled 'structurally deficient' bridges in the county

According to the report, in New London County, the most heavily traveled "structurally deficient" bridges are as follows:

1. I-95 over Route 161 in East Lyme
2. Gold Star Bridge northbound in New London
3. I-395 over Route 97 and Shetucket River in Norwich
4. Route 1 over Pawcatuck River in Stonington
5. I-395 over Route 85 in Waterford
6. Route 349 northbound over Amtrak in Groton
7. Route 349 southbound over Amtrak in Groton
8. Route 2 eastbound over Route 85 in Colchester
9. New London Turnpike over Trading Cove Brook in Montville (town-owned)
10. Route 138 over I-395 in Griswold